

Indigent Ill Cost Heavy—Los Angeles County Spends Million Per Year on Tuberculosis Outside Institutions.—Approximately \$1,000,000 is being spent annually by Los Angeles County in the care of tuberculous indigents who are not in county-owned institutions but are the legal responsibility of the County Charities Department, according to records on file in the offices of the department.

The tuberculous indigents are in addition to 970 patients in Olive View Sanatorium, the capacity of that institution, and 290 in the six tuberculosis wards of the General Hospital, which have a normal capacity of 233.

The \$1,000,000 is divided into three parts as follows:

Approximately \$480,000 for the annual cost of maintaining 870 patients in twenty-five privately owned rest homes.

Another \$405,000 is the estimated amount that will be needed this fiscal year as the total relief budgets for more than 1,600 cases confined in their own homes.

The balance of \$60,000 is for the medical care of this latter group.

Death of W. W. Beckett, President of California Medical Association in 1909.—The *Los Angeles Examiner*, in its issue of June 4, 1936, printed the following:

DEATH CALLS DOCTOR BECKETT

Medical Director Emeritus of Insurance Company Had Active Career

Dr. Wilbur Wesley Beckett, 79 years of age, leader of Los Angeles in the medical field and vice-president and medical director emeritus of the Pacific Mutual Life Insurance Company, died yesterday after a one-day illness.

Only last Sunday [May 31] Doctor Beckett, amid a group of friends and relatives, celebrated his birthday at his home at 2218 South Harvard Boulevard. Tuesday evening he suffered an apoplectic stroke.

Doctor Beckett came to California with his parents, who had crossed the country in a covered wagon in 1852, to Forest Grove, Oregon.

Doctor Beckett was graduated from the medical department of the University of Southern California in 1888, being a member of the institution's first graduating class. He took a postgraduate course in New York. Then he began his practice here, and in 1901 he entered the life insurance field.

He maintained his contact with the Southern California medical college, being dean emeritus of the institution and a trustee of the University. He was a past president of the California Medical Association and was a member of numerous clubs and organizations.

Doctor Beckett leaves two sons, Dr. Wilbur Archer Beckett and Francis Haynes Beckett; a niece, Miss Zella Keim, who has been living with the physician since the death of Mrs. Beckett six years ago, and two sisters, Mrs. Pernelia Keim of Glendale and Mrs. Elizabeth Phillips of Oakland.

Aid of Insects and Molds Shown to Doctors at American Medical Association Meeting.—Insects known to infest man, insects that heal certain human ailments, and molds that cut the cost of making medicines were on display by entomologists and chemists of the United States Department of Agriculture at the meeting of the American Medical Association (May 11-15) at Kansas City, Missouri.

Entomologists of the department prepared exhibits to show the part played by several flies in causing myiasis among human beings. Maggots of several species of flies—entering the body with food or drink—remain in the intestinal tract, causing severe abdominal pains, nausea, and headaches. The most common producers of intestinal myiasis are flesh flies, the rat-tailed maggot, the little house fly, and the latrine fly.

Where abundant, the nose bot-fly—normally parasitic in the head sinuses of sheep and goats—sometimes injures, or even blinds, people it happens to fly against. It deposits its maggots in the eyes of its victims.

In the North, Northwest, and East, children sometimes are infested with larvae of parasitic flies, which burrow into the skin, producing boil-like eruptions. Recovery is rapid with the removal of the maggots, unless a secondary infection develops.

Small first-stage larvae of horse bot-flies cause a peculiar form of dermatitis in man, seemingly most com-

mon in the north central states. Reddish, sinuous wheals, about one-eighth inch wide—the mark of larval movement beneath the skin—usually appear on the forearms. Physicians cut out these larvae or kill them by freezing a small area of the skin with ethylene chlorid or carbon dioxid "snow."

Larvae of ox warble flies occasionally attack man. Before breaking the skin, these larvae often move about through the body, with the accompaniment of paralytic and other grave symptoms.

Man is subject to attack also by screw-worms—the larvae of the parasitic blowfly that is a serious livestock pest in the South.

Following the use of maggots in the treatment of chronic osteomyelitis, entomologists of the Department of Agriculture have been studying how maggots produce their remarkable healing effects. They have found that the maggots excrete a substance called allantoin, a powerful healing agent.

The exhibit will describe this substance which has much the same healing effect as the maggots and is now substituted for the maggots themselves. At first isolated from maggot excretions, allantoin is now produced chemically from other sources.

Some of the results of putting molds to work to make various chemicals and the way it is done form part of the department's display. By the action of molds, corn sugar has been made to yield four substances used in medicine or in physiologic research—calcium gluconate, kojic acid, calcium d-lactate, and citric acid. Effective manufacturing methods developed by department chemists several years ago are now used by the industry. These improved methods are largely responsible for reducing the price of calcium gluconate—extensively used in calcium therapy—from \$150 to 50 cents a pound.

How to determine the presence of selenium in soils and vegetation and the effect of seleniferous vegetation on animals are shown in another exhibit.

The department also sent to the meeting samples of citrus fruit juices, apple concentrate, concentrated grapefruit juice, and apple, date, and pear sirups made by a process that insures indefinite retention of fresh flavors and nutritive properties.

LETTERS

Concerning evaluation of membership.

San Bernardino, California,
May 2, 1936.

My dear Doctor Warnshuis:

This will acknowledge receipt of my membership certificate in the California Medical Association for the year 1936.

This membership means much to me, and calls to my mind the pleasure I have had in associating with my fellow doctors in the more than fifty years that have elapsed since my admission to practice here in California. From November 11, 1885, to 1936 is a long time, and it has seen wonderful development in our profession. May the coming fifty years be as rich as have the last fifty, and may the profession continue to receive the benefit and inspiration from the Association that I have received during my many years of membership.

547 "D" Street.

Sincerely,

M. ANTOINETTE BENNETTE, M. D.

Concerning date of organization of the Alameda County Medical Association.

Oakland, California,
May 18, 1936.

To the Editor:—I am very much interested in the article, "The Lure of Medical History," in the *CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE* for April, 1936, but may I direct attention to the error in the footnote on page 295 that the Alameda County Medical Association was organized early in 1871?

The Alameda County Medical Association was organized on August 25, 1860, and reorganized on October 18, 1869. I am the county society historian and have all

records covering the organization and reorganization from those dates to the present.

I have done a great deal of work on the history of our association and if you have space to spare some time, I would like to submit something for your approval and publication.

Dr. Henry Gibbons was president in 1860 and Dr. Thomas H. Pinkerton in 1869, both later serving as presidents of the California Medical Association.

426 Seventeenth Street.

Cordially yours,

FRANK R. MAKINSON, M. D.

Concerning mussel quarantine.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
SACRAMENTO

Subject: Mussel quarantine order.

To Health Officers:

A quarantine of all mussels from the ocean shore of California from the southern boundary of Ventura County north to the California-Oregon boundary, with the exception of the Bay of San Francisco, is hereby established. All health officers and food inspectors are hereby instructed, until further notice, to enforce the provisions of this quarantine and to prohibit the taking, sale, or offering for sale, mussels gathered in the district specified.

Said action is taken for the preservation of the public health.

W. M. DICKIE, M. D.

Director of Public Health.

Effective May 19, 1936.

SPECIAL ARTICLES

CALIFORNIA SUPREME COURT'S OPINION ON THE GIVING OF ANESTHETICS BY NURSES*

L. A. No. 15162. In Bank. May 18, 1936

William V. Chalmers-Francis, William Dewey Wightman, George P. Waller, Jr., and Anesthesia Section of the Los Angeles County Medical Association (a Corporation), Plaintiffs; William V. Chalmers-Francis and George P. Waller, Jr., Plaintiffs and Appellants, vs. Dagmar A. Nelson and St. Vincent's Hospital (a Corporation), Defendants and Respondents.

Los Angeles County—Allen B. Campbell, Judge.

For Appellants—Le Roy Anderson, Frank L. Kostlan, Hartley F. Peart; Howard Hassard, of Counsel.

For Respondents—Mott, Vallee & Grant; John G. Mott, Paul Vallee.

Amicus Curiae for National Association of Nurse Anesthetists—Kenneth H. Gould.

Two practicing physicians and surgeons, on behalf of themselves and all other doctors, brought this injunction proceeding to restrain the defendant Nelson, a licensed and registered nurse employed by the defendant hospital, from administering general anesthetics in connection with operations. Such practice by the defendant is asserted to constitute the illegal practice of medicine, in violation of the Medical Practice Act. Judgment went for the defendants, and plaintiffs have appealed.

Appellants' arguments are directed to the proposition that defendants are illegally practicing medicine. Respondents contend that the Medical Practice Act is a penal statute, the violation of which will not be enjoined in the absence of a nuisance resulting therefrom. They cite and largely rely upon the recent case of *People vs. Steele*, 4 Cal. App. (2d) 206, 40 Pac. (2d) 959, 41 Pac. (2d) 946 (hearing denied in this court), in which it was held that a mere violation of the Medical Practice Act does not constitute a nuisance warranting the issuance of an injunction in the absence of some showing that such asserted illegal practice of medicine is so conducted and carried on as to be injurious to public health, and therefore a nuisance. They overlook, however, the opinion of the District Court filed in denying a rehearing in the case, wherein that court, in distinguishing certain cases cited

on petition for rehearing, declared that "In those cases, holders of licenses to practice a profession were allowed to enjoin unlicensed defendants from practicing the same profession in competition with them. The cases are not in point on the question of the right of the state to enjoin such unlicensed practice." Appellants claim this language would seem to warrant the present type of action. Whether this be so or not is immaterial in this case. The judgment must be affirmed on the merits of the question at issue.

The findings, which are amply supported by the testimony in this case, show conclusively that everything which was done by the nurse, Dagmar A. Nelson, in the present instance, and by nurses generally, in the administration of anesthetics, was and is done under the immediate direction and supervision of the operating surgeon and his assistants. Such method seems to be the uniform practice in operating rooms. There was much testimony as to the recognized practice of permitting nurses to administer anesthetics and hypodermics. One of the plaintiffs' witnesses testified to what seems to be the established and uniformly accepted practice and procedure followed by surgeons and nurses, and that is that it is not diagnosing nor prescribing by the nurses within the meaning of the Medical Practice Act. We are led further to accept this practice and procedure as established when we consider the evidence of the many surgeons who supported the contention of the defendant nurse, and whose qualifications to testify concerning the practice of medicine in this community and elsewhere were established beyond dispute. That such practice is in accord with the generally accepted rule is borne out by the decided cases. (*Frank vs. South*, 175 Ky. 416, 194 S. W. 375; *Underwood vs. Scott*, 43 Kan. 714, 23 Pac. 942.) While these two cases construe provisions of statute law specifically relating to the practices and duties of registered nurses, they are in agreement with the definitely established rule relating to the subject. (*Frank vs. South*, supra; *In re Carpenter's Estate*, 196 Mich. 561, 162 N. W. 963.)

Aside from the proposition that nurses in the surgery during the preparation for and progress of an operation are not diagnosing or prescribing within the meaning of the Medical Practice Act, it is the legally established rule that they are but carrying out the orders of the physicians to whose authority they are subject. The surgeon has the power, and therefore the duty, to direct the nurse and her actions during the operation. (*Armstrong vs. Wallace*, 8 Cal. App. [2d] 429, 439, 47 Pac. [2d] 740; *Schloendorff vs. Society of New York Hospital*, 211 N. Y. 125, 105 N. E. 92.)

The judgment is affirmed.

WASTE, C. J.

We concur:

CONREY, J.

CURTIS, J.

LANGDON, J.

THOMPSON, J.

SAN DIEGO PRESS COMMENTS ON THE C. M. A. 1936 ANNUAL SESSION*

(From the *San Diego Evening Tribune*, May 25, 1936)

URGES WAR ON MEDICAL CONTROL BY STATE

Organized medicine was warned by Dr. Robert A. Peers of Colfax, California, to "wake up and be on its toes to protect the future of the profession against isms that threaten to undermine the splendid service built up by physicians and surgeons of the country." Peers' address, opening the formal sessions of the sixty-fifth annual convention of the California Medical Association today at Hotel Del Coronado, was heard by more than two thousand members of state medical societies.

"We are now confronted with a menacing situation—an attempt to regiment this great profession by having the government take control of the practice of medicine," said Peers. "Thinking men in and out of our profession believe this to be a grave mistake. We are just beginning to take the offensive, with an ever-growing public opinion supporting us.

"It is not enough for us to be just good physicians, good citizens, or merely observe our civic obligations in matters of public health. We must maintain eternal vigilance to

* Official minutes of the House of Delegates and Council meetings of the Coronado annual session will appear in the July issue.

* See also editorial comment on page 461.